

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figures 1, 2, 3 and 6. These sheets, which include Figures 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6, replace the original sheets including Figures 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. In Figures 1, 2, 3 and 6, changes have been made to the reference numerals so that they now match the corresponding descriptions in the specification.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

Annotated Sheets Showing Changes

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Summary

Claims 1-10 are pending in the application. Claims 1-10 have been cancelled. Claims 11-19 have been added. Claims 11-19 are pending in the application. The amendments to the claims are supported in the specification. No new matter has been added.

Drawings

Applicants have amended the drawings to overcome the Examiner's comments. Applicants request that the Examiner accepts these drawings.

Rejections

35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Latour et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,849,102) and/or Friedman (U.S. Patent No. 4,715,955). Applicants have cancelled claims 1-10 and added new claims 11-19. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

New claim 11 recites, "the first and second transverse filtrate channel portions are configured to form acute angles with an upper surface of the first end plate, wherein the source of fluid is configured to flow out of an outlet port of the first end plate." Thus, the structure of claim 11 provides the first and second transverse

filtrate channel portions that form acute angles in order for the fluid to flow out of an outlet port. The acutely angled feed channel portions establish a specifically desirable structural arrangement providing an operator with easy access to the fittings associated with each of the channels and ensuring confidence that any fluid within the housing will drain out through the fittings. (Specification page 4, lines 10-16).

Latour et al. provides "A pair of membrane ultrafiltration cells are mounted on each of the front and back surfaces of a central bidirectional manifold having an exit and an entrance conduit connector on the same side wall of the manifold. The manifold takes fluid to be filtered from a source through a conduit connector for full flow delivery to each filter cell and collects filtered fluid from each cell to be dispensed through a further connector." (Abstract). Further, Latour et al. states "it is an object of this invention to provide a filtering system of increased capacity utilizing a plurality of interconnected filtering devices incorporating replaceable membrane filtering cells which are replaceable without the need of disconnecting any fluid conduit connections." (Column 1, lines 40-45). However, Latour et al. does not suggest, anticipate or disclose that it provides first and second transverse filtrate channel portions that form acute angles in order for the fluid to flow out of an outlet port. In fact, Latour et al. discloses a manifold that has fluid flange connectors 19 and 20 that are fitted to passages 47 and 48, but does not discuss how the fluid will flow out of the manifold or if it will be added by channels or portions that have acute angles. (Column 3, lines 38-58).

With respect to Friedman, the invention provides “a filtration apparatus including a filtration module having an axially stacked plurality of filter membrane sheets with the module defining a stack of fluid flow chambers having multi-edged perimeters and disposed on opposite sides of and substantially co-extensive with each membrane sheet. The perimeters of the membrane sheets and the chambers are sealed such that fluid flow between adjacent chambers must pass through a membrane sheet straddled thereby. Also defined by the module are a plurality of feed passages communicating with alternating ones of the chambers adjacent first axially aligned edges thereof, a plurality of retentate passages communicating with the alternating chambers adjacent to second axially aligned edges thereof opposite to the first edges, and a plurality of filtrate passage means communicating with other ones of the chambers between the alternating ones thereof and with the filtrate passage means entering the other chambers adjacent to either the first or second aligned edges.” (Column 1, lines 34-55). However, Friedman does not suggest, anticipate or disclose that it provides first and second transverse filtrate channel portions that form acute angles in order for the fluid to flow out of an outlet port. In fact, Friedman discloses that fluids exits through outlet ports 56 and 57, but there is no disclosure of first and second transverse filtrate channel portions that form acute angles in order for the fluid to flow out of an outlet port.

Thus, Latour et al., alone or in combination with Friedman does not anticipate, suggest or disclose providing first and second transverse filtrate channel portions that form acute angles in order for the fluid to flow out of an outlet port. Further, Latour

et al., alone or in combination with Friedman, does not include acutely angled feed channel portions establish a specifically desirable structural arrangement providing an operator with easy access to the fittings associated with each of the channels and ensuring confidence that any fluid within the housing will drain out through the fittings.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that new independent claim 11 is allowable. Claims 12-15, which depend from independent claim 11, are allowable because independent claim 11 is allowable. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner allows claims 11-15.

New Claims

Applicants have added claims 11-19. The specification supports the addition of this claim. (Specification, page 6, lines 18-24, page 7, lines 1-6 and 16-24, page 8, lines 1-22, page 9, lines 9-12 and 21-23, page 10, lines 1-9 and 15-20, page 11, lines 3-7, page 12, lines 9-24, page 13, lines 1-24, page 14, lines 1-24 and page 15, lines 1-15).

Conclusion

New claims 11-19 are patentable. Therefore, in view of the above amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly requested. If for any reason, however, the Examiner feels that a telephone interview would be helpful in resolving any

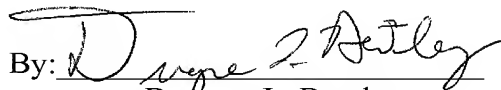
remaining issues the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Applicants respectfully assert that the claims are in allowable form and earnestly solicit the allowance of the claims 11-19.

Early and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

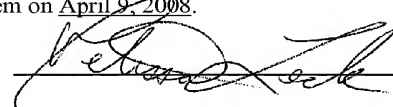
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